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LETTERS.

THERE are few things by which the flight of time is more sensibly measured than by the difference of feeling with which at various periods of our lives we indite or receive Letters. In the dawn of life, indeed, as at its close, we have the greatest unwillingness to set pen to paper at all; but the causes of the disinclination are quite different. In those very early times, we are not perhaps confident about our *ps* and *qs*; whether our *ls* should have a loop in them, or whether the personal pronoun should be a little *i* or a big one. Our spelling is entirely phonetic; and maybe we are not unconscious of our want of ear even for the attainment of *that* accomplishment; while, in addition, we are sure to have some misunderstanding with our own middle finger, which the writing-master requires us to straighten, and which Nature as imperatively demands shall be kept bent. Unhappy epoch of pothooks and hangers, how well do we remember it! when we could not persuade our teacher that a child could possibly be near-sighted, and 'Sit up, sir! will you sit up, sir?' sounded so implacably in our ears. How nose and chin followed closely that serious pen of ours in all its rounded turns and exquisite up-strokes! How our lips, through a sense of the overwhelming importance of the task, formed themselves into the shape for whistling—when whistling, goodness knows, was far from our thoughts—as it delicately dotted the *is*! How our whole face accompanied its horizontal movements, when it crossed—not the Rubicon, but—the Tees! Still, what we had to write, we wrote willingly enough; albeit, for the above reasons, and because composition itself was not at that time a very easy matter, our epistles were not of the longest; the paper superficies they covered was indeed considerable, but they did not in those early school-days contain much epistolary matter:

'MY DEAR MA—I am very well so is bob all our tin is gone, a cake would not be unexceptable we dont get enough to eat dear Ma indeed. Love to Pa and Nero who i hope is looked after.—Your dutiful and affectionate son, JEMMY.'

We always accomplished that 'dutiful and affectionate' without mistake, on account of our having to send off a 'holiday letter' at the conclusion of every half-year, which ended with those adjectives. Doctor Whackem himself set the copy of this for the whole school, and looked over our shoulders with painful frequency during the epistolary process. What a number of fine sheets, with lines so carefully ruled for us, did we spoil with blots and errors; and what

a hypocritical piece of composition it was when all was done, and how it smelled of india-rubber where they had tried to erase the pencil-marks!

'MY DEAR PAPA AND MAMMA—I am very well and happy here, for Minerva Hall is indeed a home to us; but I shall of course be very delighted to see you again. This is to inform you that the holidays begin upon the Friday after next, when Doctor Whackem will give out the prizes in the schoolroom at half-past one, D.V. The Earl of Reddiforaniman has consented, with his usual urbanity, to take the chair. I hope I shall please you, my dear parents, by getting a prize. Doctor and Mrs Whackem desire me to give you their kind compliments; and believe me to be your dutiful and affectionate son, JAMES GOODCHILD.'

It was a pleasure to write even such an epistle as that in those times, because of the holidays it heralded.

Then the Letters we received at school, how unexceptionably welcome they were to us, especially if they weighed somewhat heavier than usual, and cunningly and safely imbedded in the sealing-wax there was found the desired half-sovereign; or if they conveyed tidings of 'a parcel'—expression delightful in its very vagueness—already despatched to 'my dearest Jemmy' by the carrier, the contents of which were to be equally divided with our brother Bob. Alas! what memories the sight of one of those letters would awaken now; what regrets! what tears! We sometimes grudged poor Bob that equal share of his; we were glad when there were pots of gooseberry-jam sent—Bob didn't like gooseberries—and on all occasions drove too hard a bargain with him, he being the youngest. He never grew to manhood and to 'Robert,' but lived and died; and will be ever known among the rest of us—who are thinning by this time sadly—as our boy-brother, 'Bob.' There were no such associations about those school-letters then.

In our adolescence, letter-writing was even a blyther matter still. There was then never any necessity compelling us to it. Out of the abundance of our heart, the pen indited. Our honest thoughts, fresher far than afterwards—and not less true, perhaps, though somewhat crude—flowed from us without effort and without fear. What aspirations had we at that epoch, which—to our present shame, be it confessed—our cheeks would burn with self-contempt to hear now uttered by the friend to whom we wrote them; and he again had the like radiant visions, and laid before our sympathising eyes his own fond dreams of life. What vigour, what elasticity, what overflow of genial humour one must have then possessed to have filled whole pages *gratis*!

Now, unless compelled by direst need, we never catch ourselves leaning over foolscap, except for a consideration.

Love-letters—what a splendid occupation the writing of those was wont to be! How pleasant to issue from our mental mint a thousand honeyed synonyms for the Beloved Object! How we lingered over each soft expression, toying with it tenderly as though it were itself the half-angelic being to whom it was addressed!

She is sixteen stone by this time, and her (second) husband's name is Potts, a drysalter; but that dread future was, in mercy, unrevealed to us at one-and-twenty.

Jones was in love with her also; and I have got one or two of his letters now, which the dear girl let me have at that time, in the strictest confidence.

What an unsuspecting, generous, impulsive, affectionate young fellow he must have been! (I hope Jones has not got any of mine, composed about the same epoch). Wizen, bloodless, grasping little money-seeker that he is, how *could* he have ever concocted such epistles! I can't fancy him inditing anything beyond 'Received yours of the 24th instant,' and 'I am, gentlemen, your most obedient humble servant;' by which he means their commercial rival, and most uncompromising foe.

I wonder whether it would be possible for a man to write a *bona fide* love-letter to a wife; I mean, of course, to his own wife, for in the case of another's (we have heard) the thing is practicable, and even easy enough. One couldn't have the face to call her an angel, although one might wish her in heaven; and as to her being addressed as a fairy—think of Belinda Potts, and a fairy of sixteen stone! The handwriting of dearest Belinda resembled a slanting shower of summer-rain; and when it was crossed, as it very often was, by another slanting shower, it was rather difficult to decipher. I think, however, that only enhanced the interest of her delicious meaning, which came out, when it did come, all the fresher, like a flower from the mist. I could detect her long-looked-for communications by more than one organ of sense before they left the postman's hand; their envelopes being pink, and redolent of patchouli. That was how I discovered that Belinda was corresponding with young Hitchins, as well as with myself and Jones. Hitchins was her first husband, and ran away with her from her paternal roof. I should like to see any unassisted individual attempting to run away with the present Mrs Potts.

When Cupid has once departed, taking with him the golden pen and the red (heart's blood) ink, there is no more joy in Letters. They henceforth become a matter of business only and of compulsion. We strive to trick the post-office by making a single stamp do double duty, and, on the other hand, grudge bitterly having to pay the least over-weight in the communications of our friends.

In our married and settled condition the postman becomes to us a daily nuisance. He brings earnest manuscripts from our wife's brother, who is in want of a hundred and fifty pounds for a special purpose, after which, he says, he will be an honour to the family; affectionate notes from our mother-in-law, who is looking forward to spending three or four months with her dearest Jemima, and her James, who

seems like her very own blood; circulars from charitable societies, who 'make no apology for appealing to our sense of Christian duty' (there are no such satirists as your philanthropic people). Worst of all—because reminding us in the cruellest possible manner of the genial past—college bills for wine, cigars, or other vanity we had fondly deemed to have been paid for years ago.

Then, as we grow to be more and more of a *paterfamilias*, more and more bills; we groan in spirit as our delighted daughters hasten at that dread 'rat-tat' (rustling those expensive morning-dresses of theirs), to open the letter-box. What contents they bring us, to spoil our matutinal meal, and to impair a digestion which is already in the most artificial state imaginable!

Here they are. Bill, Bill, Business, Circular (social), Circular (religious), Death (Poor Smith gone; our own age, too, within six months or so, and similar habit of body; horrible!), Bill, Bill ('I wish, Jemima,' tossing it over to the wife of our bosom, 'you would dress the girls more like young people of moderate means, and less like balloons; I won't pay for such foolery, that's flat), Mother-in-law ('Here's your mother coming *again*; let her pay for them'), Business, Brother-in-law, Bills.

Alas, this laughing mask of ours conceals a sad countenance. The satirist of our own day who calls old letters the best satires in the world speaks a frightful truth. Unlock the old chest full of them, the old drawer, or the old desk, and cast your eye over the yellowing rubbish it contains. Open the worn covers, superscribed in the forgotten handwritings, and read the once welcome words spoken by hearts that have long been changed: your mistress's, 'she that married the nabob, and for whom you now care no more than for Queen Elizabeth;' or your beloved sister's—ah, 'how you clung to one another until you quarrelled about the twenty-pound legacy!' This humour of the modern humorist is terribly grim!

A genius, of our own day likewise, but of a very different kind, has written something worthier than this upon the subject of Old Letters—'of those fallen leaves which keep their green (he calls them), the noble letters of the dead.' He shews himself sitting alone in his chamber at late eve, when the rest of the house have retired, and when, without, 'the white kine glimmer, and the trees lay their dark arms about the field,' reading aloud the old letters of his dead friend: when, strangely on the silence broke the silent-speaking words, and strange was Love's dumb cry, defying Change to test his worth; and strangely spoke the faith, the vigour, bold to dwell on doubts that drive the coward back, and keen, through wordy snares, to track Suggestion to her inmost cell; and word by word, and line by line, the dead man touched him from the past, and flashed his living soul on his— Thus he held awful converse, till the doubtful dusk revealed the knolls once more, where, couched at ease, the white kine glimmered, and the trees laid their dark arms about the field: till, sucked from out the distant gloom, a breeze began to tremble o'er the large leaves of the sycamore, and fluctuate all the still perfume; and gathering fresher overhead, rocked the full foliaged elms, and swung the heavy-folded rose, and flung the lilies to and fro, and said, 'the dawn, the dawn,' and

died away; and East and West, without a breath, mixed their dim lights like Life and Death, to broaden into boundless day.

A WEEK AMONG THE HEBRIDES.

SECOND ARTICLE.

IMAGINE a pretty little town of white-washed houses stretching like a semicircle round the head of a bay with a sunny western exposure—a background of irregular protuberances rather than hills, which terminate on the right in the woody heights and picturesque ruined castle of Dunnolly, and on the left by a similar piece of rugged scenery, amidst which, among embowering trees, are placed two or three villas: then, imagine that the bay is bounded so completely in front by a green and pastoral island, as to seem enclosed by the land, and you may have some notion of Oban—an object so calm, so pretty, so uncongenial on these wild and secluded shores, that at first sight it occasions an emotion of surprise. A little inquiry makes the stranger aware that Oban, like many other towns in the Highlands, is a modern Scoto-Saxon settlement, founded for the purpose of improving the country; and that latterly, very much through the efficacy of Hutcheson's steamers, it has undergone considerable extension. Tasteful villas are perching themselves about on the rocky knolls behind the town; branches of banks and other commercial undertakings are being established; and hotel and lodging-house accommodation is recently much enlarged. Already, I have spoken of the Caledonian Hotel as a high-class establishment; but there are some other good hotels for tourists: I am, in short, told that the town can accommodate five hundred strangers, and that, by casual visitors alone, as much as £10,000 is spent annually in the place.*

Two objects of much antiquarian interest in the immediate neighbourhood, the ruined castles of Dunnolly and Dunstaffnage, usually attract the notice of visitors. By the politeness of the proprietor of Dunnolly, the small party of excursionists of whom I formed one, were permitted to visit the ruins, which, clothed in ivy of the brightest green, and placed on the summit of a huge rock overlooking the sea, form a beautiful and imposing feature in the landscape. Dunstaffnage Castle—gray, massive, and of greater historical interest than Dunnolly—is situated at the distance of three miles from Oban; and being shewn by a resident keeper, it can be seen at all times with no more trouble than a short walk or ride. No stranger should omit visiting Dunstaffnage, for independently of its connection with events during the old Scottish monarchy, and its being the original repository of the famed Stone of Destiny, now forming part of the coronation-chair in Westminster Abbey—the scenery around, a happy blending of sea, rocks, islands, and lofty mountains, of which Ben Cruachan is the most conspicuous, cannot fail to evoke the most pleasing emotions.

It is time, however, to be getting on. While I have been talking in a very rambling way about how tourists are to transfer themselves to Oban, and of some things that are to be seen there, the *Mountaineer*, distinguishable, like all other of the Hutcheson boats,

by its red funnels, is hissing and snorting at the pier like an impatient Highlander, and threatening to break away and be off on what was intended to be a special cruise among the islands. It is a summer morning in the end of June, and our party, seven in number, having hastened from the hotel, are now on board; the hissing ceases, the paddles begin to rumble, and in five minutes we are steaming at the rate of nearly eighteen miles an hour down the Sound of Kerrera. It was a very joyous-looking day, bright patches of sunshine interspersed with deep shadows on the hills of Lorn; the air crisp and dry; and the sea in a tolerably well-disposed mood.

Our first destination, of course, was Iona, 'that illustrious island, which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion.' To reach this classic spot, steamers proceed from Oban according to wind and tide, either round the north or south side of Mull: if by the northern route, Staffa is first visited; if by the southern, Iona—the usual practice, we believe, being to go one way and return another; by which means the tourist circumnavigates Mull, and has an opportunity of seeing, close inshore, various lofty and jagged precipices, and several ruined castles standing in desert loneliness on half-insulated peaks over the white foam which dashes on the iron-bound coast, while far above and beyond these objects he will have a view of huge, misty-topped mountain masses, one of which, the giant of a particular group, attains the height of 3000 feet. The voyage to Iona, by the shortest or southerly passage, ordinarily occupies about four, but on the present occasion, it was effected in three, hours. We left Oban at seven, and at ten were in the Sound, a mile in width, which has the Ross of Mull on the east, and Iona on the west—the isles of Colonsay and Jura being seen far away in the south. At this point, the territory of Mull sinks into tameness, and offers some scope for cultivation, with space on the level shore for a village, whence there is a boat-ferry to Iona, which, at a glance, we perceive to possess the same unpicturesque features as the opposite coast.

Running up within a hundred yards of the island, a boat is seen to put off, manned by two or three natives, the leader of the crew being Alexander Macdonald, an intelligent and obliging Highlander, who speaks English, and acts as guide and interpreter to strangers. Approaching the shore, which is covered with big boulders partially overgrown with sea-ware, and over which, on landing, we pick our way to the dry sward beyond, we perceive that, in the present day, the island of Columba is a simple pastoral bit of land, rising in the middle to a height of two or three hundred feet, and with a slope towards the sea, on which is concentrated within a space of a hundred yards all that is interesting to visitors. But, then, such interest! Standing right in front of this gentle slope we have, first, close on the shore, a row of low huts covered with thatch, a species of roof not seemingly able to encounter of itself the gusts occasionally blowing from Mull, since it is enshrouded in a netting of straw-ropes, held down by big stones, in a manner rather threatening to the heads of the Celtic children, who are sprawling about in their little kilts before the smoky doorways of the clachan. It is proper to understand that this collection of some forty hovels is called, in Gaelic, Baile Mor, or the Great Town. I have no doubt that it is considered by the natives a very fine city, more especially as it possesses a slated house at the south end, where refreshments of a simple kind are dispensed. Baile Mor contains no inn, nor are any spirituous liquors sold within it, on which account it requires no policeman or magistrate. Considering its size, it is well off for churches. At a

* Parties under any difficulties respecting their movements, may apply to Mr. McArthur, agent at Oban for Hutcheson's steamers. His office is on the quay, and he will be found an obliging and useful adviser.

little distance, on a rocky point of the shore, stands a newly built Free Church; and scattered about behind the village are an Established Church, a parish school-house, and manse for each of the two ministers. These last-mentioned buildings, which are of respectable dimensions, are, I believe, the only dwellings in which lodgings may be obtained by persons who desire to make a deliberate inspection of the island and its curiosities.

Let us have a look, however brief, at what distinguishes this otherwise uninteresting island. Partly behind the row of thatched huts, and partly a little to the north, amidst enclosures of low stone dikes, are a series of ruins in three detached groups, to which we gain access by a rude kind of pathway, environed by the patches of potatoes and corn of the humble villagers. Guided by Macdonald, we do not reach the ruins in the order of their antiquity, but according as they happen to lie. The more southerly group reached first in the series, is a nunnery, of which the chapel, with walls tolerably entire, is the principal remnant. This monastic establishment for females is said to have been founded in the early part of the thirteenth century, a date almost indicated by its finely rounded Saxon arches. Within and around it are some flat tombstones commemorative of prioresses and ladies of rank who were here interred. On one, considerably mutilated, the sculptured figures are exceedingly fine, representing the last prioress; her head supported by angels, and the figure of a little dog on each side—indicating, possibly, that she had been attached to these animals. The date of her death is 1543. Turning round an angle of the building after examining these relics, there stood before us, ranged demurely along a wall, about a dozen little girls, each holding in her hand a small plate of pebbles and shells, which were silently offered for our inspection and purchase. There was something affecting in the attempt of these poorly clad, but clean and orderly children, to pick up a few pence in exchange for the only articles they could find for sale, the coloured stones—bits of serpentine, quartz, and feldspar—which had been worn by the attrition of ages on the shore of the adjacent seas. We selected and purchased some of these tiny fragments; but on giving a shilling to be divided among the party, we were disconcerted to find that the girls did not understand a word of English—a circumstance not very flattering, I must needs think, to those who charge themselves with their education. Luckily, Alexander Macdonald made them all happy, by translating and explaining our intention. Strangely enough, it is alleged that the custom of offering pebbles and shells for sale dates uninterruptedly from the period when pilgrims to the shrine of Columba piously bore away relics of the saintly island; morsels of serpentine, in particular, being prized for the purpose of being set in rings, which possessed a certain protective virtue against divers accidents and misfortunes. Wordsworth, it will be recollected, alludes in one of his sonnets to the pebble-sellers of Iona:

How sad a welcome! To each voyager
Some ragged child holds up for sale a stone
Of wave-worn pebbles, pleading on the shore
Where once came monk and nun with gentle stir,
Blessings to give, news ask, or suit prefer.

The next group of ruins to which we are admitted is that of St Oran's Chapel, being apparently a sepulchral chapel in the midst of the burying-ground, which had received the remains of Irish, Scottish, and Norwegian kings for several hundred years, besides those of abbots, bishops, chiefs, and others who had deemed it an honour to be entombed in what, during the middle ages, was one of the most noted resorts of learning and piety in Western Europe. Several rows

of flat tombstones, sculptured and in good preservation considering the usage they have received from iconoclasts and fanatical relic-hunters, are pointed out by the guide; the whole being of a durable species of mica slate, but gray, and partially covered with vegetation. Eight hundred years ago, this spot of earth received the mortal remains of Duncan—an historical event of which Shakspeare, with his usual tact, makes proper use:

Rosse. Where is Duncan's body?

Macduff. Carried to Colme's-kill.

The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,
And guardian of their bones.

The various names given to Iona can hardly fail to perplex a number of tourists. On the tombstones, it is uniformly called by a word formed of the single letter I or Y—pronounced *E. Colme's-kill*, sometimes written *Icolmkill*, signifies the cell of Colme. Latinised according to the medieval usage, Colme becomes Columba, and I is euphonised into Iona. The real name of the island, therefore, is I, or, in pronunciation, E. While so called, it became in 563 the chosen residence of a handful of Irish missionaries, who, under the charge of Colme, their gifted superior, introduced the knowledge of Christianity into Scotland. Of St Colme, or Columba, however, the island cannot with certainty shew any trace. The early and simple edifices of the apostolic band were merged in edifices of a more aspiring kind, which sprang up under the ritual of the Church of Rome. The nunnery, as already seen, is a comparatively modern erection, and so is the third or last group of buildings to which we are conducted, consisting of the cathedral, which latterly became the seat of the bishops of the Isles. This edifice is the most imposing of all the ruins. Its tall square tower, seen at the distance of several miles, rises from the centre of a cruciform structure, of different ages—to the older Saxon arches there being added the pointed Norman, along with decorations of a still later period. It will be for ever matter of regret that the rage for indiscriminate destruction which marked the Reformation in Scotland, should have been carried the length of pulling in pieces all that was artistically beautiful, all that was consecrated by learning and religion in Iona. Buildings were destroyed, clergy and educators chased away, piles of documents of vast historical value dispersed, and the island allowed to lapse into barbaric rudeness; the only parties benefited, as was usual in such cases, being those singularly disinterested personages who accepted from the crown gifts of the varied patrimony of the colony of Columba. After much dilapidation, some care has been taken by the proprietor, in conjunction with the Iona Club, to secure the ruins from utter demolition; nevertheless, it is painful to say that the whole place is kept in a shabby, ill-assorted condition, and if something be not done to secure by masonry several finely groined vaults, damp and decay will speedily lay them prostrate. Both in going to and walking about the ruins of the cathedral, the visitor sees several upright crosses, consisting of slabs of sculptured slate; such being everything that remains of some hundreds of similar elegant objects with which the island was at one time adorned.

Once more on board, the *Mountaineer* steamed rapidly out of the Sound of Iona, with her bows pointed in a northerly direction to Staffa, which was seen right ahead, at the distance of six or seven miles; the view towards the east disclosing Ulva, with the small island of Gometra, at the opening of a bay on the coast of Mull. As Ulva, like Staffa, is a basaltic formation, we now may be said to have got into an archipelago of a very remarkable kind,

geologically; it being far from improbable that the whole is but part of a range which comprehends the Giants' Causeway. Perhaps nothing more strikingly marks the low state of public intelligence which prevailed eighty to ninety years ago respecting the Western Islands, than the fact that Staffa was then unknown as an object of scientific interest. Pennant, who made his journey in 1772, did not land on the islet; he only speaks of seeing it at a short distance. Sir Joseph Banks visited it a month afterwards; spent two days on it, having brought a tent for the purpose; and he was really the first man of science who became acquainted with its wonders. Before either Pennant or Sir Joseph had made any public statement of their discoveries, Johnson and Boswell visited the Hebrides; and, strange to say, they knew nothing, and were told nothing, of either Staffa or Ulva. Boswell observes that when about to quit Col, 'they were informed that there was nothing worthy of observation in Ulva;' and so they took boat to the small island of Inch Kenneth, on their way to Mull. It may be doubted whether these wandering philosophers would have cared much for seeing Staffa, even if they had heard of its natural marvels. Johnson had no regard for scenery, however grand; he liked to go from one private house to another, conversing about social and political questions; while, in his peregrinations generally, he was at the mercy of any one who had a boat, and would, as circumstances served, generously send him on from island to island. However this may be, the fact is certain, that not till 1774 did the world know anything of Staffa, of which Sir Joseph Banks, in a burst of enthusiasm, says, 'compared to this, what are the cathedrals or the palaces built by men?—mere models or playthings, imitations as diminutive as his works will always be when compared to those of nature.'

Staffa makes no great appearance from the sea. It is only when we get near it that the grandeur of its character becomes apparent. Ordinarily, boatmen with boats from Ulva are in attendance to land passengers from the steamer. When the sea is calm, they conduct their boats to the inner extremity of Fingal's Cave, which penetrates a high precipitous cliff with a southern exposure. On the occasion of our visit, the sea was too turbulent to admit of our taking this liberty. A boat from the steamer landed us on a lower part of the rocky shore near what is called the Clamshell Cave; and thence we climbed to the grassy surface of the island. We were enabled to make this ascent by means partly of a wooden flight of steps, that forms one of several appliances with which Mr Hutcheson has provided the island for the convenience of passengers by his steamers. To leave nothing in this respect undone, he has leased the island, and sublet it at a loss for feeding sheep, of which we saw a few browsing about. The surface is irregular, shelving generally down in a northerly direction with a kind of ravine in the centre. The only appearance of a human habitation is the open ruin of a hut on the higher grounds; and besides its sheep, the only inhabitants of the island are various kinds of sea-fowl, which are seen in myriads, hovering and screaming in front of the precipitous headlands. To have a view of Fingal's Cave, the party walked along the tops of a lower range of basaltic columns—not very even footing—which skirts the shore on the east, and in a scrambling fashion got safely round to the cavern. The description of this wondrous recess—70 feet in height and 230 feet inwards—has been so often given, that it would here be superfluous to offer any account of it. By means of a rope, held by iron bolts to the rock, visitors with nerve to do so, may walk on the slippery tops of columns some way within the cavern, about half-way from the water to the roof. None of us tried this hazardous experiment. The

crested billows rolled angrily inward, dashing themselves on the irregular sides, and surging up in masses of foam on the further end of the gulf. The Queen, on her visit to Staffa a few years ago, was so fortunate as to be favoured with that degree of calmness in the ocean which enabled her to be rowed in a boat to the innermost recesses of the cave, a feat in which her Majesty shewed her usual intrepidity.

For the sake of science as well as art, it is to be regretted that there are no means of making a protracted stay in Staffa. During the necessarily short time allowed to tourists, they can just see that the whole island is a mass of basalt, broken irregularly into columns, perpendicular and sloping, some large and some small, some entire, and others which, being broken off midway, offer a convenient footing to visitors in their rambles about the shores. A regular inquirer into basaltic phenomena would, however, need to extend his investigations far beyond Staffa. Besides the curious formations of Ulva, there will be found fantastic groupings of columns on the coast of Mull, Skye, and Eig; those in the latter island being of magnificent dimensions, towering as they do to the height of thirteen hundred feet above the level of the sea.

From Staffa, the *Mountaineer*, still early in the day, steamed her course northward; passing on the left Tiree and Col, and on the right Ardnamurchan, a bold headland, the most westerly point of the mainland. We then proceeded towards the Sound of Sleat, leaving on the left the conspicuous islands of Muck and Eig, and more distantly the island of Rum. Entering Sleat Sound, we had on the right successively the districts of Moidart, Morrer, and Knoydart—all bold, rocky, and with huge hills forming extensive pasturages; the coast being indented at several places with long withdrawing lochs, of which Loch Nevis seemed to be the most extended. On the opposite or northern side of the Sound was that part of Skye called the Point of Sleat, near which, amidst plantations, stands Armadale Castle, the seat of Lord Macdonald, the principal proprietor in the island. Although passing quickly up the Sound, we could see that on each side beyond the sphere of his lordship's grounds, the slopes of the hills were dotted over with the diminutive thatched huts of that aboriginal race of crofters whose miserable existence is an anomaly in the middle of the nineteenth century.

In the afternoon, a drizzle came on, the mists settled down on the summits of the hills, from which and other appearances, it was judged prudent to cast anchor for the night in the small and well-sheltered bay of Eillan-Oronsay, in Loch-na-dall. Here the *Mountaineer*, accordingly, came to a pause about a hundred yards from the shore. The idea of lodgings for the night at a small inn was suggested, but overruled. The steward had provided bedding for the sofas in the saloon, and could accommodate us all nicely; so there was no further trouble on that score. It was proposed that after dinner a good deal should be done in the way of fishing over the side of the vessel, with lines provided for the purpose at Oban. But, here, again, anticipations expired in talk. The evening was pronounced rather moist for any amusement of this sort, and lighted candles and whist for a time banished the notion that we were moored within hail of a state of social life which had not been seen in England since before the landing of Julius Cæsar. A long day's exposure to the air made us all sleep soundly. On retiring, if such a phrase may be employed under the circumstances, a law was passed enjoining heavy penalties on snoring, a crime which, as it turned out to the credit of the whole party, no one was even in the most distant manner charged with.

Next morning, betimes, all were alert. At seven, up anchor, steam let on, and off we were again in

continuation of our cruise. A council being called, it was resolved to proceed first up Loch Houru, an arm of the sea projected eastward into Inverness-shire from the Sound of Sleat, and which is bounded on the north by Glenelg, and on the south by Knoydart. Loch Houru is so rarely visited, that to nearly all on board the excursion was perfectly new; nor probably would it have been quite safe, if we had not had the good-fortune to have with us a retired veteran in Hebridean navigation—Captain McKillop, who, it may be noted, was the conductor of her Majesty when visiting the Western Isles.

On entering Loch Houru, which varies from a mile to less in breadth, we are struck by the picturesque mountain masses, here swelling into rounded pastoral hills, and there rising into lofty jagged peaks, from which, down precipitous gullies, dash long foaming cataracts that, from their whiteness, resemble at a distance streams of milk, while around the more elevated hill-tops, at the height of a thousand feet, play the morning vapours not yet dispersed by the sun. On the lower braes, browse flocks of Cheviot sheep; and these, with the figures of shepherds and their dogs, not less than the absence of smoky huts, plainly tell us that Knoydart has passed into the hands of an improving low-country landlord. The scenery, interspersed with natural oak and hazel, continues beautiful as far as the steamer can advance. At a turn of the loch, a boat having been sent ashore to a village for a native pilot, the vessel securely passed into an inner reach of the loch, up which it proceeded to nearly its furthest limits. Here, on the south side, the party landed, and, favoured by a bridle-path, which, by and by, widened to a sufficient breadth for carriages, we walked several miles to the pass into Glen Quoich, a gorge in the mountains environed with huge isolated rocks and boulders strewn about in all the rude grandeur of nature. Retracing our way, and again on shipboard, the vessel proceeded by Glenelg Bay into Loch Alsh, and then struck up Loch Duich, the mountain scenery at the upper extremity of which transcended, as we thought, even that of Loch Houru. At the entrance to Loch Duich, situated on a rocky knoll on the beach, are the ruins of Eillean-Donan Castle, an ancient seat of the Mackenzies, 'high chiefs of Kintail.' On the same side of the loch, in Loch Alsh, are seen various modern improvements, including the mansion and new inn of Balmacarra.

About this spot, the channel between Skye and the mainland makes a sudden turn, and the steamer shortly passing through the strait of Kyle Akin, where there is a ferry, enters a wider Sound, and for our gratification turns to the right up Loch Carron. The scenery on this loch, which is about twenty miles long, is no doubt fine, exhibiting here and there along the shore good specimens of raised beaches; but we are by this time not a little spoiled for sights; after Houru and Duich, nothing of the loch nature will pass muster; and returning to the more open Sound, we hasten on to Portree in Skye, where we are to pass the night. This part of the voyage was made by first touching at Broadford, where there is an inn, and then, after rounding the north of Scalpa, proceeding past Raasay, on the shore of which island stands Raasay House, a handsome modern mansion—an improvement on that in which Johnson was hospitably entertained; the estate having passed from the hands of the Macleods into the possession of Mr G. Rainey, by whom great changes for the better have been effected.*

* It will be recollected that Johnson and Boswell went in an open boat, manned by four stout rowers, from Corriachatachin, near Broadford, to Raasay, the doctor, as Boswell says, sitting high in the stern, 'like a magnificent Triton.' Malcolm Macleod, one of the Raasay family, celebrated in the year 1743-6,

The harbour of Portree, so completely environed by jutting high grounds as to afford the best shelter to vessels, received ours for the night, and all went ashore to Ross's Hotel, a house offering good and extensive accommodation. Portree—a name signifying King's Port, being so called from a visit of James V. of Scotland, on one of his western excursions—is a substantial little town occupying the brow of a high ground overlooking the harbour. The place was thrown somewhat into commotion with the unexpected visit of the *Mountaineer*, but the inhabitants gradually subsided into tranquillity, and unmolested we rambled about the neighbourhood in search of anything to look at. The only objects which attracted us were a recently erected octagonal tower, on a conspicuous height, hastening to ruin from sheer neglect, and on some low grounds a parcel of those dismal straw-covered biddings of which we had seen distant specimens on the coast of the island. Aided by an interpreter, a gentleman and I ventured on paying our respects to the inmates—but such a scene of dirt and poverty presented itself as filled us with horror and compassion. Bare stone walls, rafters overhead glittering with soot, and on which a few fowls were perched, the smoke of a peat-fire in the middle of the floor, finding its way out by a hole in the roof, window-holes, and door; the sty-like beds, straw and dingy blankets huddled in confusion; the clay floor and ragged yet healthy-looking children. In only one of the houses was English spoken. And how do these wretched people live? Small patches of ground under crop, but ill cultivated, and showing about as many weeds as stalks of corn or potatoes, are their principal reliance, along with fishing or executing any odd jobs that come in the way. In one of the huts, on looking into a gloomy recess separated from the rest of the apartment by a few ill-put-together boards, we saw a man lying ill—a sad spectacle of human desolation. The only house in which there was an effort at cleanliness was that in which English was spoken. The inmates here appeared to labour under the like desperate poverty; yet there was an air of the most pious resignation to what was probably felt as a dispensation of the Divine will. I could almost wish that habitual grumblers about trifles had been with us on this occasion. On one side of the peat-fire, which, as usual, was in the middle of the floor, sat an aged and lame man, the father of the family; on another side was the old mother, carding wool; while on a kind of cushion on the ground, with legs drawn up and helpless from rheumatism, was placed their daughter, who, according to her own account, had been so afflicted for the space of ten years. Administering on our departure some slight gratuity to this unfortunate being, the melancholy consideration was forced upon us that the old crofting system, which is throughout signalled by this depressed and hopeless kind of existence, is totally wrong, and should be obliterated at every available opportunity. Situated as they are, the poor people of whom we had a specimen, can neither do any good for themselves nor in any sense benefit mankind, and but for what to many may seem a certain degree of harshness, they would absorb in the form of poor-rates more than all the rental of the land. The common sense of the country, I should think, must come to this conclusion

acted as pilot, and sung a Gaelic song, which was chorused by the boatmen. 'We sailed,' adds Boswell, 'along the coast of Scalpa, a rugged island, about four miles in length. Dr Johnson proposed that he and I should buy it, and found a good school, and an episcopal church (Malcolm said he would come to it), and have a printing-press, where he would print all the Erse that could be found.' With such lively chat, did they try to mitigate the terrors of what seems to have been a very boisterous sail of several hours. In the present day, one of Hutcheson's steamers would have carried the party from Broadford to Raasay in an hour, as easily as an omnibus would take them from Charing Cross to St Paul's.

at last. Cruel as it may appear, there is nothing for the poorer inhabitants of Skye, and some other portions of the Highlands and Islands, but emigration. It is true, an outcry has been raised against expatriating an old race, for the sake of depasturing their lands with sheep for a southern market; but let any one visit the smoky hovels which are scattered along so many damp and unreclaimed hillsides, and see how utterly hopeless is the condition of their inhabitants—their very contentment being not less an evil than the language which cuts them off from any chance of intercourse with the busy world beyond—and seeing all this, say whether the removal of this Celtic population to scenes calculated to evoke their latent energies would not manifestly be a blessing.

Having caught a few glimpses of the Storr, the Cuchullin Hills, and some other striking features in the scenery of Skye, we returned with the *Mountaineer* to Oban.

In this voyage homewards, the vessel, after passing Ardnamurchan, proceeded down the Sound of Mull, by adopting which we were afforded an opportunity of calling at Tobermory, a neatly built modern town within a sheltered bay on the north-eastern shore of Mull. On the opposite and equally bold coast of Morven, a part of the mainland adjoining Ardnamurchan, we observed in succession, placed on craggy steepes overhanging the sea, the ruins of three old castles—Mingarry, Aros, and Ardtornish; this last the scene of the opening passages in Scott's *Lord of the Isles*, having been the residence of the proud chieftain of Lorn, whose

Turrets' airy head,
Slender and steep, and battled round,
Overlooked dark Mull! thy mighty Sound,
Where thwarting tides, with mingled roar,
Part thy swarth hills from Morven's shore.

On the point of Mull, at the entrance to the Sound, are the remains of another of these strongholds, Duart Castle, an ancient residence of the chief of the Macleans. On the point of Lismore, a long green island which we skirt on the route to Oban, is seen another picturesque ruin. Associating these old Hebridean fortlets, places of importance in their time, with Dunnolly and Dunstaffnage, Dunvegan in Skye, and other remains of a similar nature—all admirable studies for the landscape painter—along with the still more touching ruins of Iona, the conviction arises in the mind that here, in this western region washed by the waters of the Atlantic, and in ages long past, there existed a state of refinement, which receives little notice in the page of ordinary history—in fact, we see what till this day is so very limitedly known in the eastern and more populous districts of Scotland, that the sight for the first time, not only of these decaying remains of art, but of the grand and more imperishable features in nature, comes upon one with something like the effect of a revelation.

A special object with us in returning to Oban, was to visit the sinuities of the Linne Loch as far as Lochail and the entrance to the Caledonian Canal; and this was pleasantly accomplished by the *Mountaineer* in the space of a single day. What tourists have an opportunity of seeing in this accessible quarter, has been already hinted at—Glencoe, the scene of the unprovoked and horrid massacre of the Macdonalds in February 1692, being alike for its historical interest and sublime physical features, a spot pre-eminently deserving of a visit.

An impression left on the mind by a Hebridean excursion is, that the world generally is as little aware of the deeply interesting character of the scenery of the western islands and coasts, as of the comparative ease and inexpensiveness with which a pretty lengthened tour, by means of Hutcheson's boats and other

appliances, can now be effected. Another thing which, being pressed on our notice, affords no little satisfaction: I allude to the obvious improvement of the country, mainly, as we learn, through the transfer of property to men of capital and enlarged intelligence, from England or the Lowlands of Scotland. In sailing about, you can always see at a glance, by the erection of substantial villas and farmhouses, the clearing and draining of fields, the growth of plantations, and the building of piers and wharfs, that energetic Anglo-Saxon minds are busily at work; and that at no distant day, by the gradual thinning of the numbers of the aborigines, the state of the Highlands and Islands will be entirely changed, of course vastly for the better. It is very pleasing to know that the progress of improvement is found to be compatible with the preservation of much that is picturesque and admirable in Highland costume and character; and perhaps I do not exaggerate in saying, that many of the new English proprietors are in this respect, by adoption, more patriotically Highland than the Highlanders, and possess as keen an appreciation of the matchless scenery to which they have migrated as the Celt of twenty generations.

W. C.

A SCREW OF TOBACCO.

AMIDST the whirlwind of the late tobacco controversy, any statement irrespective of party, illustrative of that unfortunate narcotic, would have been listened to by either side with impatience. Now that the storm has somewhat abated, all the smokers who are likely to be convinced at all having given in their adhesion to moral and medical authorities, and the rest being beyond the power of eloquence—a brief narration, having tobacco for its subject, may perhaps be borne. Being merely annals and impartial history, we say, the author of that celebrated tract, entitled *The Pipesmoker's Fate, or the End of a Cigar*, may appreciate the information we have to give him, equally with the wretch who may read it with a Havanna in his mouth.

We are tobacco-merchants ourselves, and therefore open to the charge of prejudice if we took it in hand to give our own account of this matter; and we have accordingly selected the most sagacious-looking of the very oldest bundle of cigars we have in our possession, and requested him to narrate to the public his own story:

My ancestors first visited this country under the auspices of Sir Walter Raleigh; they were at that time foreigners, nor, indeed, are any of the thousands of us born and reared here, acknowledged to be sons of the soil up to this present writing. By a pleasant fiction of the tobacco-dealers, readily entered into by their agreeable patrons, we are supposed to be indigenous only to alien climes. As a matter of fact, we flourish almost everywhere. The American branch of our family is supposed to be the best—a word which signifies in that country, as in this, the richest. In Virginia, we are the *crème de la crème*, the weed of weeds. Next to that favoured region, perhaps Kentucky is entitled to make her proud boast of us. From Maryland we come with light bright faces, and are exceedingly esteemed in this country. Those of us who belong to South America differ much from their northern brethren. Brazil tobacco is a very short scrappy-looking leaf of the family tree, and is covered with the sands of the plains. That of Columbia is more tolerable, and of a fair complexion. German tobacco is a poor relation whom we are loath to own, with a most prolific growth—which poor relations always have—of dark-coloured leaves with little flavour. Havanna is unquestionably our ancestral seat;

the heads of our family there reside, respected and esteemed, and emitting a most agreeable odour. Yara, an independent member of our race, with a dry—almost sarcastic—amontillado kind of disposition, has also his admirers. In Turkey, we are very bright coloured and sweet tasted, without having, however, much strength in us. Latakia is an especially aristocratic, enervated, listless species of this description. Greek, Hungarian, and Chinese tobacco assimilate to the Turkish. In Java, we are said to be 'of volcanic growth and gutta-percha flavour,' an evidently malignant and exaggerated definition, invented, as is most probable, by a detected cabbage; in Holland, we are very respectable; but all these latter branches of us can be purchased in the London markets at from 3d. to 7d. a pound.

The great object of the manufacturer of tobacco is to make a mixture of us that will stick together, and absorb as much water as possible without our getting absolutely mouldy and fermenting—through sheer sulkiness and indignation, and when all bounds of endurance are passed. One species of us, cut by itself, is too strong; another is too mild: one will break to pieces in cutting; another bears to be pulled about in all directions. Different proportions of us are used in different seasons, in summer, in autumn, in winter. The quantity of water each kind of us will imbibe is calculated to a drop, and its increased weight known to a fraction; the profit is confined to one or two per cent. At first, a moderate quantity of water was applied to moisten us; now, the demand for cheapness, and the increased competition, compel us to derive one-third (nearly) of our total weight from moisture, and drive us, as it were, to drink, whether we will or no. The ancients may have had perhaps a higher moral standard for their commercial transactions; the moderns must needs have a sliding-scale of principle, it seems, unless they would visit Basinghall Street, and we suffer from the times. The genuine Yankee tobacco wont take much water; but the German—poor stuff enough in its natural state, without any Anglo-Saxon blood in him—soaks like a sponge: these two, therefore, are mixed together, and other growths are added of all kinds. Next to making us heavy, the great object is to render us 'fleece,' so as to be held up in a large piece of several pounds-weight together; for the retail shopkeepers will not buy us when we are 'short,' as it is called, for then being weighed and sold out in small quantities, but too much of us becomes dirt and dust. The object of the importer is of course to get a perfectly dry leaf, so that the enormous tax upon us may be levied independently of any weight of moisture. He buys us from samples drawn at the Custom-house, and very queer stuff we look when he takes us for the first time out of our bales. These bales, by the by, are generally made of the hides of the animals of the Pampas, and are sold, on account of their enormous strength, to oyster-dredgers. We resemble, on our first release, shut up fans, of the colour and texture of dried haddock; we are then called 'hands,' on account of our possessing five leaves, or fingers, upon each stem; but so brittle are we, that we can't bear even shaking.

We suffer ourselves, however, to be softened by steam, and in the thus warmed state, become perfectly pliable and supple. Our backbones, or stalks, are then extracted; we are next mixed together in great cakes, squeezed in hydraulic presses until rendered solid, and then subjected to an improved chaff-cutter, which chips us, with the perfectest regularity and dispatch, to any degree of fineness. When cut, we are passed through a steam-chamber, which expands us a good deal, then—having been shaken about on a heated copper, and all objectionable foreign substances being removed—we remain cooling in little

mole-hills for twelve hours or so, and are then ready for sale. Our leaf, cut without the central stalk, is called Shag tobacco; when cut with it, Bird's-eye. Different prices are caused by certain varieties, in colour and flavour; and to produce these, we have to be sorted, out of an original imported case.

Cigars are made from different kinds of tobacco: Havanna, Cuban, Yara, Columbian, and German are most generally used. Each cigar consists of three parts; the interior is composed of what is called 'fillers,' with scraps of leaf of every sort and kind: this is surrounded by a tolerably large piece, which is yet not good enough to form the outside 'wrapper;' and this last, selected for its beauty of appearance and smoothness, is the mummy cloth which encloses the whole. There is great difficulty in getting leaf to 'dress itself' well enough for this purpose; it is apt to look shabby and torn, and scarcely decent. German leaf makes the neatest and cheapest wrapper. Both the inside and outside of a cigar are of course made of materials varying as their price. A cigar that sells at threepence, is made of Havanna inside and out; one at twopence, of Cuban inside, and German out; one at a penny, of German inside and out; or, as some assert, of straw inside, and cabbage out; but that has nothing to do with us.

When we are rolled into cigars, we have more aliases bestowed upon us than pickpockets; 'a great deal of water, and a great many names,' as the wags say. Your twopenny cigar, for instance, is *Woodville*, alias *Haydee*, alias *Cubana*, alias *Tragancia*, alias *Marina*, and is a scamp of the deepest dye. Names mean absolutely nothing. Boxes, brands, and labels are all imitated, or made up by the junior clerks out of the Spanish dictionary.

Foreign cigars are rarely met with in any quantity, the price being so very great that dealers scarcely care to keep them. They pay nine shillings a pound duty, and cannot be sold under fourpence each. They are superior to those of home-make in appearance, in consequence of having been made up soft, and dried gradually upon their voyage from the Havanna; the material also being in that country of comparatively little value, only the best parts are used. Otherwise there is no reason why they should be better than the best English cigars made from the best foreign leaf. The foreign cigars are packed in hexagonal bundles of one hundred each. Manilla cheroots have been analysed by an eminent chemist, and proved to contain no *o'ium*—which has been the heinous offence hitherto laid to their charge—and they are clearly of a more rational form than the cigar. The point of the latter is made with considerable trouble, only to be bitten off and thrown away. Cheroots would be made of as good a material as are cigars, were there as great a demand for them. The cigar-makers turn out three or four hundred daily, and earn from one to two guineas a week. While they work at their desks—in the large establishments, to the number of thirty or forty in a room—one of them, whose work is of course done for him, is often accustomed to read aloud to the rest. The employment of these human rollers is an easy, ladylike one enough, and might be practised instead of *potichomanie*. Every fragment of us saved is applied to some purpose. Our stalks are made into Scotch snuff, the Irishwoman's 'soft roe' ground up very fine, sifted and scented (or not) with different mixtures. Rappee snuff is our leaf powdered to a gunpowder grain—sifted, and wetted, and scented with otto of roses. Roll-tobacco, used for 'plugging,' is made of the richest Virginian, spun into different thicknesses, and pressed for months. There are far worse things done with us in some places than those I have here described; there is quite a Borgia system of poisoning administered to the British public, under pretence of

the pipe of peace. I am myself, however, in a respectable house. I am bound round with a spangled ribbon, like those worn by Spanish dancers, in company with ninety-eight of my fellows. The name that I at present enjoy is that of an *Imperial Lopez Regalia*; but to-morrow I may be a *Nicholas*, and the next day an *Omar Pacha*. Tobacco for pipes comes to the consumer, as I have said, with but small profit to the dealer, but the cigar must be paid for—as that cadet of our family, Snuff, would say, 'through the nose.'

But, alas, alas, I am in the hands of a purchaser; it is well that my story is told; for my existence will be but for a few minutes longer, and then my ashes will be scattered on the winds!

THE FALSE DREAM.

SOME time after Louis XVIII. was restored to the throne of his ancestors, when the last of the emigrants had returned and set themselves up in the dilapidated *hôtels* of Paris and the still more ruinous châteaux of the country, with a large display of old crests and titles, and a great diminution of ancient state and style; when the Faubourg St Germain and its adherents firmly believed that the Bourbons were never more to be rooted up, but the régime would go on from one generation of Louises and Charleses to another, always maintaining etiquette and keeping down the people—the entire house of Courtois was thrown into confusion by two young persons, who insisted on getting married.

The house of Courtois belonged to the noblesse of Brittany. It was very numerous and very poor, with the exception of its venerated chief, a marquis of seventy-three, who had come back in the time of the Emperor, recovered all his own estates and part of somebody else's, married in regular succession three handsome dowries, wore crape for the ladies who accompanied them, and was now a widower with no children. The marquis kept fast hold of all that came into his hands, and gave laws to the whole of his kindred. They knew he would die some day; and as most of their prospects depended on his testament, there was not a more absolute monarch in ancient or modern history. They managed their houses, they educated their children, they were married, and, it was said, born according to his commands. The number of the families that existed on the hope of his demise, and obtained consideration from their neighbours and credit from their tradesmen in consequence, may be imagined, from the popular assertion, that there was not a town or village in France destitute of a Courtois. Every one of them enjoyed a pedigree reaching from the first crusade; but, for the sake of ancient blood, it is to be lamented that not only fortune, but nature herself, had behaved in anything but a liberal manner to that noble house. It was a fact not less generally recognised than their numbers, that all the sons were stupid, and all the daughters plain; and the disposal of either was always a difficult business. The disturbing young persons above mentioned were striking exceptions to this family rule. Silvestre had been born at Bordeaux, and Adeline at Avignon. They were both orphans. Their relationship was that of cousins thirteen times removed. The gentleman's estate consisted of a ruinous building, half farmhouse and half château, which one of his ancestors had built for a hunting-lodge in Bas Bretagne; but the surrounding domain had diminished to some mètres of garden-ground: and the lady's dowry was limited to a pearl necklace and certain trimmings of

old lace bequeathed to her by her grandmother. The whole house of Courtois had, nevertheless, formed high expectations of their future. Silvestre had taken so many honours at college, that his granduncle, who was confessor to one of the Duchesses de Berri's maids, promised to get something done for him if he went into the church; and Adeline came from the convent of St Clair such a pretty, graceful girl, that her cousin, the count's widow, who wanted somebody to enliven her large dreary *hôtel* in the Faubourg, and cheer up her very small parties, said she would introduce her to good society. Who knew but the girl might make a brilliant match, and the marquis might give her a dowry?

If there was ever the slightest probability of the latter event, it was rendered null and void by an unlucky meeting at mass in the Madeleine, where Silvestre saw Adeline, and Adeline saw Silvestre. Both remembered that they were relations. An acquaintance and a love-making followed; and then, in spite of all good advices and every manner of warning, the pair would make a match of it. Of course the marquis was consulted by a family deputation, for he lived in strict retirement, at least from his relatives, though his house was never empty of company and cards. His decision was given in the course of a fortnight: that the young unmanageables should be married with all convenient speed, supplied with two cheap suits each, and sent to live at their ancestors' hunting-lodge in Brittany. These orders were carried into immediate execution. The lovers promised to pray for the marquis all their days, and went rejoicing, with the two cheap suits, to lead a life of Arcadian simplicity and unalloyed happiness, under the administration of old Jacquette, who had been Silvestre's nurse, and stewardess of the château and garden-ground, ever since he grew too tall for her management.

Their appointed residence was situated in a wild and solitary dell about a league from the village of St Amand. The country round was half marsh and half moorland; it had once been a forest, and in some spots there was still underwood enough for the wolf and wild-cat to bring up their families. The house had been a low square fabric, with four turrets; these were gone, and so was part of the roof. There were just four rooms habitable on the ground-floor, and only two of them furnished, with chattels which Jacquette had inherited from her grandmother; but the arms of Courtois were still discoverable over its moss-grown entrance. There was a tradition that a robber had been hanged there by one of its ancient lords; so the whole country was proud of the place, and called it the Château St Amand. St Amand itself was one of the poorest and oldest-fashioned villages in all Brittany. Under the roofs of its timber cottages, the cows and the sheep, the hens and the family, all lived sociably together. They ground corn there with a handmill, and believed that the oxen talked to each other every Christmas-eve. No physician or notary had ever looked for practice there; no government had ever thought it worth while to appoint a *préfet* or postmaster in that village. All its public affairs were managed by Father Martin; he had said mass in St Amand for thirty years, and so many changes of governors had occurred in that time, that the good man could never distinctly make out who had last come back to the Tuileries; but nobody had ever known him to forget a fraction of his own dues. Under such temporal and spiritual direction, a Breton village might do very well without physician or notary, postmaster or *préfet*; but it could never do without a wise woman; and that important office was, by common consent, assigned to the stewardess of the château. Nobody knew her age; the more her hair grizzled, the more carefully did Jacquette cover

it with the red handkerchief which formed her only head-dress. Sun and wind had brought a naturally dark complexion to the identical tint of the russet woollen gown she wore invariably week-days and Sundays. Jacquette's costume was not *recherché*, nor her beauty striking; but she was a short, robust, muscular woman, very active, very thrifty, generally good-humoured, and always proud of herself and her mansion. In one of its furnished rooms she had lived with her cow for the last ten years, keeping the other, which contained the flower of her grandmother's legacy, religiously shut up against the coming of the young master; for it was her conviction that, when Silvestre made his fortune, or a great match in Paris, he would retire to his family seat and live like a Courtois. In the meantime, Jacquette looked after her one cow and bit of garden-ground as the only estate she had to manage; and never were cow and garden turned to greater advantage. The good woman was accustomed to boast that she grew the strongest garlic, and made the hardest cheese, in the commune. Certain it was that on the cow and garden she lived, and contrived to save something—how much, no man was permitted to know—and that mystery, as usual, added importance to the subject. But though deeply respected on this account, Jacquette was still more venerated by the villagers for a faculty she had of dreaming. It was asserted even by Father Martin, that no event, public or private, had ever fallen out in the land, without information of its coming being conveyed to her somewhere between the setting and rising of the sun. The number of births, deaths, and marriages she had thus foretold, would have astonished anybody but a Bas Bretonne. The loss of cattle and sheep, the falling of old houses, and the occurrence of thunder-storms, had been made known to her without measure. The young people of St Amand were accustomed to consult her regarding the prosperity of their love-affairs, the old about the probabilities of their harvests; and Father Martin himself held conferences with her in hard winters touching his Christmas dues.

To this gifted woman, her cow, her garden, and her two furnished rooms in that crumbling old house, came the newly married pair. Of all the relations, Jacquette had been most disappointed and indignant at the match, particularly, it was thought, because she had received false information on the subject in some of her dreams, and predicted a charming bride and a surprising dowry for Silvestre. The honest woman scolded them to the whole village till they arrived; then she did her best to make them welcome: opened the state-apartment, turned the cow into an empty one, worked early and late to make things go far enough for three, taught them all she knew of gardening and cow-management, and kept a sharp eye on their conduct, for Jacquette knew they were but foolish young people. Count nor seigneur had resided in that neighbourhood for three hundred years; the villagers had, in consequence, an immense respect for nobility; and, as the young strangers were of the house of Courtois, did not wear sabots, and enjoyed the protection of Jacquette, they were received with uncommon reverence at the church and market of St Amand. It was not a gay life or a very promising one, but Silvestre and Adeline were in those years when prospects are of little account, and in that state of mind which makes people everything to each other. The young man had not been long enough in view of having something done for him, to miss that outlook and all its accompaniments. The girl had seen just sufficient of her cousin's good society to know that it regarded her as a young person brought home from the convent to be disposed of if possible. They had been poor and despised in Paris, it was better to be poor and revered in

Brittany; so they lived contentedly under Jacquette's government, shared her labours and her fare, and repeated to each other all the verses they could remember about the happiness of a quiet country-life, far from the cares of courts and the sins of cities.

Things had proceeded in this fashion for about six months at the château St Amand. By good-luck, no more of its roof had fallen in, nor had the cracks in its walls grown much wider, and there was every probability of its holding out for the rest of that season, as the winter storms were almost over and Easter at hand; yet her cow and two old hens, accustomed as they were to the good woman's eccentricities, must have been astonished one Saturday morning, for Jacquette got up sighing and groaning, as if not only her own days, but those of the château had been numbered. The young people were not permitted to know it, but they could not help seeing that there was something wrong; she groaned over her spinning-wheel, she grieved to her garden spade, she paused in frying an omelet to cross herself devoutly, and admonished them to go and say their prayers. More amazed than edified by these signs of affliction, they naturally began to fear that Jacquette's senses were giving her the slip; but, after mass next day, when they stayed to see the dance on the village-green, the secret was revealed to her Sunday visitor. It has been stated on good authority that there is no such thing in France as a woman without a lover. The stewardess of the château, accordingly, had one: the widow Renée's son, commonly known in the village as Lazy Jules, had paid his respects to her every Sunday evening, through shower and shine, for the last five years, and been hospitably treated to the hard cheese and the strong garlic. For the latter delicacy Lazy Jules had a special preference; but, on this eventful evening, instead of producing the consumables as usual after the first salutations, Jacquette seated herself on the opposite bench, crossed her arms, and gave a deep groan.

'What is the matter?' said Lazy Jules.

'Don't ask me,' said Jacquette; 'I would not tell it for all the world; but I suppose I must to you, Jules. Listen then, but you won't speak of it—no, not to Father Martin himself. I had such a dream on Saturday morning, just before the cock crew. Jules, I can't make it out; but I never had such sorrow in my sleep. I thought that Father Martin had come here early in the morning—though, good man, he never gets up too soon—and brought, oh, such bad news to my young master and mistress. What it was, I cannot remember, nor make out at all; but I woke with the tears in my eyes and the grief in my heart, and I know there is some great evil hanging over them. Maybe, it's my own going home, Jules. I have led a good life and a hard one, and should not care much for myself. Nobody would miss me, I suppose,' and she glanced at Lazy Jules inquiringly. 'But these young people, what would become of them without a caretaker?'

On which grievous consideration, Jacquette began to cry. Lazy Jules assured her she was good for forty years to come, seriously recommended her to trust in Providence, and finding that the cheese and garlic were not forthcoming, he soon after took his leave.

Jules had been for some time contemplating the propriety of breaking off his suit. A suspicion had crossed both him and his mother that Jacquette's savings might not be as considerable as they had been led to imagine; and now that such shadows of coming evil had fallen on her sleep, his resolution was taken, never to be found another Sunday at the château. In the succeeding week, his spare hours—and they were always numerous with that young man—were spent in imparting to the whole neighbourhood

the tale which was not to be communicated even to Father Martin himself; and before the next Sunday, all St Amand were waiting for the château to be blown down or burned, in fulfilment of Jacquette's dream, and were also aware that Lazy Jules had determined to visit there no more. Of course, the state of the public mind at length reached the ears of the wise woman; and what she said on the occasion concerning Jules, his mother, his family, and his ancestors, need not be recorded here, for Jacquette's tongue was none of the smoothest when she had cause of wrath; but the scold was not fairly over till about three weeks after, when she was roused one morning in the early gray by a loud knocking at the outer door. The good woman's heart died within her as Father Martin presented himself; but the priest's countenance was full of joy and triumph.

'Wake up your young master and mistress,' he said, 'for I have brought news they will dance to hear, in spite of all your dreams. The old Marquis of Courtois is dead, and has left all his fortune to them.'

Father Martin never made a joke about money; it was too sacred in his eyes. Jacquette knew that; and scarcely was his tale told, till she was at the bedside of the sleeping pair, vigorously shaking them both, and crying: 'Get up, get up; you'll lie no more in my old grandmother's bed, nor eat garden-herbs; there's silks and satins, horses and carriages for you; you'll go to mass with two footmen behind, and be called my lord and my lady.'

After this rousing, it was some time before the young people could understand that Jacquette's senses had not departed, and that the legacy for which the whole house of Courtois had done suit and service before they were born, was actually their own. The old marquis had died at last, and whether to disappoint all his relations, amiable man, or to enrich the only promising members of the family, he had previously made his will in favour of Silvestre and Adeline, constituting them joint-heirs of all his possessions except the title, which descended to his heir-at-law, a lieutenant in the African Chasseurs, whom the noble marquis had cordially hated. The rage and disgust of his numerous relatives when this testament was made public, may be imagined. They unanimously refused to attend any mass said for the soul of the deceased, and it was debated among the pillars of the house in Paris, whether or not a commission of lunacy should not be had recourse to. Equally high rose the tide of public feeling at St Amand. It was feared that the widow Renée and her son would drown themselves on the first announcement of the event; but they only set off for Upper Bretagne. Jacquette utterly lost her repute for dreaming from that day; nobody would believe in any subsequent revelation she might get in her sleep; but the honest soul thanked God and all the saints; and it was glorious to hear her dilate on the new roof, the four turrets, and the general plastering the château would get when her young master and mistress came back from Paris in full possession of their great fortune, to keep their family coach, and buy up the whole country, with the right of hunting boars and hanging robbers, like their noble ancestors in the good old times.

To Paris her young master and mistress went in pursuit of their legacy. They had left that centre of civilisation under the cloud of a penniless marriage—they returned to it people of mark and consideration, protected by notaries, and envied by all their relations. As the commission of lunacy was not likely to be got, the latter transferred to them the homage they had been so long accustomed to pay the departed marquis. Once established in his hôtel, friends and advisers multiplied around them, every one endeavouring to make

those young people so fresh from the country sensible of wants and requisites becoming their new position. What the granduncle and cousin of former days did or proposed to do, history does not inform us; but Silvestre and Adeline were introduced to fashion, to elegance, and to society with the celerity known only to the happy possessors of large fortunes. German barons, Italian counts, and Russian princes came and did them honour. Madame learned the value of diamonds, Monsieur the use of cards. They forgot all the verses about country-life; they did not like to hear Bas Bretagne mentioned, lest the château and Jacquette might come to people's knowledge, and it would have been an unpardonable offence to suppose that they had ever been out of Paris.

These were not the only changes their good-fortune wrought on the young Courtois. At the particular suggestion of their evil genius, the marquis had so made his will that it was impossible to say where their individual rights terminated, or what was the boundary of each legatee. They would not have disputed for mere bank-paper or acres; but there was a latent love of power and command in both characters, which had not been visible in the young man for whom something was to be done: in the girl brought home from the convent, or in the pair who married for love without a sou, and lived and gardened with Jacquette in the ruined château. Scarcely had the novelty of being in Paris and having money worn off, when questions regarding privileges and proprietorship began to arise. The joint legacy made them separate interests. First came debates, and then quarrels. The husband found out his authority, the wife her munitions of war. Both parties got lawyers and friends. Within a year after their happy accession, they were holding rival state and receptions in the marquis's great house. Adeline was flirting desperately with a Russian prince of the true Tatar type, by way of avenging her wrongs; and Silvestre was paying court to a terribly rouged duchess of sixty-five. There were temporary reconciliations, and still fiercer quarrels. There were family councils, and suits in law-courts; and at length, all Paris talked of the trial of a lady, young and beautiful, rich and nobly born, but accused of poisoning her husband—it was said to frustrate his design of shutting her up in a lunatic asylum.

Jacquette had gardened and spun, and looked after her cow almost two summers; every evening and morning walking up to the rising ground above the village, in hopes of seeing her young master and mistress return with the family coach and other requisites for putting on the new roof and four turrets. Letters never came or went from St Amand. Jacquette knew no surer method of getting intelligence of her young people than a journey to Paris. It was a long way, and made a sad inroad on her savings; but she reached the great city just in time to hear that Madame Courtois had escaped the guillotine—her sentence being commuted, in consideration of the above-mentioned set-off, to twenty years' imprisonment. Sad of heart, and sorely disappointed, the faithful stewardess returned home. She never told the story to anybody but Father Martin; and in process of time, it seemed to have slipped out of her own mind, for as the roof crumbled away, and the walls grew more crazy, she was accustomed to wonder to the good villagers who looked in upon her and her respected mansion, why the young people did not come back and begin the repairs. Latterly, as revolutions multiplied in the land, and even the Bas Bretons began to talk politics, she was heard to say that things would never be right in France till the château got its new roof and four turrets; but the predictions of her later years had no weight with the people of St Amand, for they

remembered that a great fortune had come to Jacquette's young master and mistress, in spite of her false dream.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

To say that hot weather has been the chief subject talked about, that it has taken the vivacity out of all other topics, except, perhaps, the noisomeness of the Thames, is to begin with a truism. As usual in extraordinary cases, Mr Glaisher and his brother meteorologists have been trying to find a parallel season, and they have had to go back forty years. Such extreme heat before mid-summer is indeed a rare phenomenon. As a consequence, rains almost tropical in character have fallen. In one of the storms, three inches of rain fell at Birmingham within three hours, and one half of the quantity in twenty minutes. Hence we of the temperate zone have seen somewhat of the effects of great heat and moisture peculiar to the torrid zone.

The functionaries of the British Association have issued a very good-natured circular, to announce the meeting at Leeds for September next—22d to 29th—and to invite many, both Britons and foreigners, to the gathering, assuring them of amusement and comfort, as well as science. They promise a sight of manufactures, of interesting natural scenery, caverns, cascades, and so forth, attractive alike to the geologist and artist. If the invitation had only promised, besides, an entire absence of smoke, it would have been perfect.

With a view to foster their art, the Photographic Society are organising a scheme for the exchange of photographs among their members.—Photography is now brought into play for one of our social usages; and people who make morning-calls, instead of leaving a card with their name, will henceforth leave a card on which their own portrait has been photographed in miniature. Likenesses instead of names; the notion is a good one; but will the select few who indulge in the luxury have a fresh portrait taken every year to insure a faithful likeness?

According to official returns, the quantity of paper charged with duty in this country in 1857 was 187,414,667 pounds, shewing a decrease from the former year. This falling off, it is said, would not have taken place but for the injurious and unfair operation of the paper-duty. Were this duty taken off, we should see a rapid development of ingenuity in the art of paper-making—materials which cannot now be worked up at a profit would then come into use, and many a languishing mill would revive into busy life. The government is not prepared to remove the tax; but the House of Commons have resolved that the duty on paper is 'impolitic,' so we may hope that in the course of next session the obnoxious impost will be repealed.

Mr Carrington of Redhill Observatory has drawn up a set of instructions for the guidance of astronomers who may travel to South America to observe the forthcoming eclipse of the sun. It has been suggested, that while one party observes on the east coast, and another on the west, a third should take observations from one of the elevations of the Andes, between the two.—We hear that the United States government, now that the delusion about 'British outrages' has died away, intend to equip an expedition to follow up the discoveries made by the late Dr Kane within the Arctic Circle.—News from the Niger expedition reports that Dr Baikie was at Rabba in good health and condition.—We have another instance of the intelligence of the New Zealanders in the establishment of the *Port Nicholson Messenger*, a

newspaper printed in the native language for the benefit of the natives. Communications from natives in their own vernacular are frequent; and considering the advances they have made in other ways, we shall not be surprised to hear before long of Maori editors, printers, compositors, and publishers.—At Cape Town, a new building has been erected for a library and museum; which affords satisfactory evidence that money-making does not, as has been said, engross the whole attention of our brethren on the other side of the globe.

In a communication to the Statistical Society on Public Works in India, Colonel Sykes rectifies certain popular misconceptions, and shews that much more has been done than is commonly supposed. Nearly nine thousand miles of road have been made in the Punjab states—the countries on both sides of the Indus—in Hazara—the Peshawar Valley, since 1853. A considerable portion is, of course, roughish in quality; but a rough road is better than none, and improvements are continuous and systematic. The Grand Trunk-road from Calcutta to Delhi, 837 miles, is as good as any turnpike-road in England, and cost L.489,100. The Great Deccan Road from Mirzapoor to Nagpoor is 400 miles in length, and the road from Bombay to Agra, 735 miles. Four steamers and four flats ply on the Ganges, and on the Indus ten of each. A line of what are called steam-trains is to be established on the river, to run between the terminus of the Sind railway at Kotree, and Moulton, the terminus of the Punjab railway, each train to be capable of carrying a thousand men, or a proportionate burden of merchandise. The whole outlay for public works in 1854–55 was L.2,230,000. Irrigation works are in progress; and where these are introduced, the land is fertilised, and the wealth of the empire increased. The Ganges Canal is to yield L.145,000 a year of revenue. The value of water is great in a country where little or no rain falls for eight months of the year; but, as Colonel Sykes observes, it is not all land that will bear a water-rate, and 'it is, moreover, quite a mistake to suppose that the bulk of the population in India lives upon rice, which, from requiring a water-supply, has its cost so much enhanced above that of the plentiful panicums and sorghums: as a general food, the consumption of rice is only general in the low districts of Bengal, Orissa, Madras, and Malabar.'

The carrying out of public works in India is a very different thing from what it is in this country, where all means and appliances are abundant. There the chief-engineer must be ready with manual labour as well as mental labour; 'his resources are chiefly in himself, for he must be not only the designer of the works, but the head-mason, the head-carpenter, the head brick and lime-burner; in fact, the man of all detail, and of all general design.'

The Acclimation Society of Paris, having obtained a grant of fifteen hectares of land in the Bois de Boulogne, are about to establish a garden for the better carrying out of their various operations, which are 'to acclimatise, multiply, and distribute animal and vegetable species, either useful or agreeable.' With this resource the Society will be able to accomplish more than heretofore. As we have shewn from time to time, they have already done great things: they have introduced the yak, with its wool, into France; a new species of yam, as a substitute for the potato; potatoes fresh from South America, to renovate the worn-out stocks of Europe; the sweet sorgho, in the culture of which Southern Europe will become a sugar-producing country; the silkworm of the castor-oil plant—*Palma Christi*, and with such success, that the worm is now in its twenty-first brood, and is accustomed to feed on the leaves of the tassel; moreover, by careful management, the hatching

of the eggs is made to time with the growth of the tassel leaves. This is a remarkable result, as the silkworm in question is a native of Algeria, where the warm temperature is earlier than in France. Aided by French missionaries in different parts of the world, the Society have nearly succeeded in propagating the oak-silkworm in the open air, in countries where the climate is dry. And they have recently received plants of the *Loza*, a species of buckthorn, which produces Chinese green, or green indigo, as it is sometimes called; which plants, it is said, will bear the winter of Paris. Other facts might be enumerated; but in these the Society fully demonstrate their claim to consideration.

This Chinese green will become a valuable addition to industrial resources, particularly for dyers. M. Rondot has written a book about it, entitled *Notice du Vert de Chine*, giving a clear history of that remarkable product and its properties. The book contains specimens of calico and silk dyed with the 'green,' and engravings of two plants, *Rhamnus utilis*, and *Rhamnus chlorophorus*, from which it is derived. These plants are new to European cultivators; they are, however, allies of the *Rhamnus theeans*, which has long been known as a tree from which the poorest class of Chinese pluck the leaves to use as a substitute for tea. The colour of the dyed silk is remarkably bright, a blue green, one of that class of colours which increase in brilliance in the light. It contains, in fact, some immediate principle which can only be developed by light, and it is a nice task for chemists to discover what this is. Persoz says that light will have to be more and more regarded as an industrial agent; and of the Chinese green he remarks that it is *sui generis*, containing neither yellow nor blue. By experiments made at Lyon, it appears that six species of the European *Rhamnus* will yield a green dye: all the others are to be tried.

Natural history has been somewhat popularised of late, and now another contrivance for promoting the study is put forward in the Butterfly Vivarium. Youthful students will doubtless derive as much pleasure and amusement from butterflies and moths as from fishes and water-snails. We have heard, too, of a Bryarium—a glass-case for mosses—a description of which was communicated a short time since by the Rev. H. Higgins to the Linnæan Society. He fits the case with shelves, and keeps the plants in pots in proper soil, and waters them when needful by means of a syringe. Some of the pots require to be placed in trays of water. In this way a large collection of mosses may be grown; and a little experience shews which kinds thrive best. Mr Higgins finds some species of *Bryum* very successful, and mentions the *Fissidentea* as 'gems for cultivation.'

A botanical subject reminds us that a veteran botanist, Mr Robert Brown, died last month, at the age of eighty-five. He was in many respects a remarkable man. As keeper of the Botanical Department in the British Museum, he continued his duties there within a few weeks of his decease, retaining his usual clearness of mind and cautiousness of expression; and his sight was so good that he never wore spectacles. In him we have lost a link with the men of science of the past generation—John Edward Smith, the founder of the Linnæan Society, Banks, Solander, Davy, and others.

Mr Sclater has read a paper before the Linnæan, in which he attempts to systematise a part of natural history in a way that will interest naturalists. Among the facts which he brings forward, he states that there are in the globe 7500 species of birds, and 6000 square miles of the globe's surface to each species.

The fourth volume of General Sabine's translation of Humboldt's *Cosmos* is published, or rather the first part of the fourth volume, containing, however, 699

pages. It treats of the 'organic and inorganic domain;' coming down from the sidereal universe, where we can use only our eye, to the earth, which we can examine and experiment on by our other senses and other means, and in which we are more interested. It sums up what is known of the phenomena of terrestrial magnetism; of the density and ellipticity of the earth; of certain volcanic phenomena of the aurora; and all with the same masterly insight and power of generalisation as in the former volumes.

Apropos of volcanic phenomena, Sir Charles Lyell has read a paper before the Royal Society on lavas and the formation of Etna. His recent visits to Sicily and Naples, and persevering and laborious investigations while on the spot, have led him to conclusions opposed to those of Von Buch and Elie de Beaumont, who hold that volcanic craters are the result of upheaval. Sir Charles attributes them rather to the repeated outpourings of molten material which have built them up, so to speak, on the outside. With this the question is raised, and now geologists of both schools have only to argue it out to a true conclusion. Meanwhile, Vesuvius is pouring out new floods of lava, repeating phenomena which they may witness with their own eyes, and inform themselves by actual operations. Sir C. Lyell expresses surprise that so little should be known of the last eruption of Etna, 1854-55, and so little notice taken of it, considering its magnitude—the greatest for centuries. Where, on his former visit, he had seen verdant glens and forests, now all is obliterated, and for many a league the eye views nothing but ridges of black lava.

Some curious experiments have lately been made, shewing the effects of electricity on thin jets of water. If an electrifier be held near a jet which forms a sheaf-like stream on passing through an orifice, the dispersion ceases, and it becomes a single thread of water; but if the electrifier be brought yet nearer, then the drops are reproduced. Again, hold an electrified stick of sealing-wax at the top of a small column of water, and the cylindrical form will be unbroken; but shift the electrifier to the base, and the brush forms at once at the top of the jet.—Mr Faraday shews that if a ball be placed on a flat metallic plate connected with a Grove's battery, it (the ball) sends off a stream of sparks as soon as the current is established, and runs rapidly around the plate.—De la Rive, in a letter to Mr Faraday, explains a method by which he produces an artificial aurora. Into a glass balloon, he introduces one end of a bar of soft iron, fitted with the necessary connections; he exhausts the air, and sends in a very small quantity of vapour of alcohol, ether, or turpentine, and then making a communication with a Ruhmkorff's coil, he gets an aurora on and around the end of the rod, which throws off luminous coronations and rotates quickly. The direction of the rotation may be changed at pleasure. But for surprising effects produced by electrical discharges in a vacuum, Mr Gassiot's experiments, shewn before the Royal Society, excel all other. He produces quivering bands of light of surpassing beauty; and to demonstrate what further can be accomplished, he is making glass tubes for the vacuums of dimensions far exceeding any hitherto attempted for the same purpose. Out of all this it is thought we shall arrive at some positive conclusions concerning the phenomena of the aurora, besides other manifestations of electricity.

As regards a useful practical application of electricity, we hear that a manufacturing chemist in France, taking advantage of the sulphates thrown down by a battery in action, has produced 130,000 kilogrammes of 'metallic white,' fit for house-painters, since 1853.

Advances have been made in the physiological

applications: Mitteldorff of Breslau heats wires to a white heat by means of a battery, and uses them for cauterising interior surfaces, or to cut off tumours. The advantage is said to be great, because the wire can be applied to the part affected before heating, and that the heat, though intense, can be withdrawn as instantaneously as it is produced, and the patient is spared the alarm of seeing a red-hot wire brought near his face, breast, &c.—The *Nuovo Cimento* contains an account of experiments by Count Linati on that interesting subject—the reinvigoration of nervous energy by electricity. He brings a current from a Daniell's battery to bear at the same time on the dorsal and the epigastric regions of his patients for two or three hours at a sitting; and, after several sittings, he finds that the circulation is increased in activity by about one-seventh, with a more energetic pulse; that the respiratory function is augmented in a similar degree, as also that of the stomach and intestines, while the repairing power of assimilation is sensibly facilitated.

A frog poisoned with *curare*, that South American poison, exhibits curious results: the nerve will not contract on the application of electricity—shews, indeed, not the slightest sign of sensibility; but if the muscle is touched with the wires, it contracts strongly, and preserves the contractile power longer than if unpoisoned. Cold has the effect of diminishing the rapidity of a current of electricity through a nerve; a fact from which operators may take a hint. M. Duchenne of Boulogne—on whom a decoration was lately conferred by a decree published in the *Moniteur*—turning these and other conclusions to account, has demonstrated, and with marked success, the therapeutic effects of electricity. He owes much of his success to the means by which he localises his applications. He makes use of three terms in his process—namely, electrification, galvanisation, and Faradisation; the last, which is induced electricity, is the best agent in muscular electrification, especially when required to be long continued, and is, as M. Duchenne avers, the medical electricity *par excellence*. By dint of experiment, he has determined the proper dose for the respective nerves and muscles, an essential consideration, seeing that an overdose involves danger, and the patient might find himself fixed with a contraction, or deformity, greater than that he wished to cure. Some of M. Duchenne's cures are astonishing; by persevering in his electric applications, he has restored paralysed and contracted limbs to their natural condition, inducing the power of voluntary motion; and when that is once achieved, even in a small degree, he leaves it to the will to finish the work. His electric moxa is described as more severe than the actual application of fire.

Mr Gant, of the Royal Free Hospital, has published an inquiry on the *Evil Results of Overfeeding Cattle*, the main point of which is, that meat forced and formed unnaturally is unwholesome; hence disturbance or loss of health in those who eat thereof. Cattle, sheep, and pigs, are now fed up to a size quite disproportionate to their age, or rather to their youth, that prizes may be won at cattle-shows. The heart and lungs are in consequence made to work at high-pressure; these organs thereby become diseased, and with them the whole carcass. Mr Gant tested his conclusions by following the unwieldy creatures from the show to the slaughter-house, by observing what there took place, and by examination of the meat after it was cut up. Among the overfed animals, he mentions the Prince Consort's pigs as distressingly fat and heavy. These evils have been complained of before; but the answer is, that by overfeeding a few, you improve the whole breed of cattle, and so supply the market with better meat. However, seeing that Messrs Lawes and Gilbert have

written a paper on the feeding of cattle, and presented it to the Royal Society, we may hope ere long to be in the possession of sound, practical conclusions on the subject.

M. Gobley has made a careful analysis of snails, to determine anew the constituents of which those slow animals are formed, with a view to ascertain whether they really do contain a cure for thoracic affections. His conclusions negative the belief that the carbonate of lime acts on the tubercle; there is nothing, he says, 'which makes it possible to consider the constituents as exerting any specific action in maladies of the chest.'

PRECEDENCE IN THE FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURIES.

HAVING given a view of housekeeping three hundred years ago, we readily embrace an opportunity that now presents itself of saying a word on the table observances of the time, as regards precedence. A rare black-letter book, to be found among Bishop More's valuable collection in the Cambridge University Library, and entitled *The Boke of Kervynge* [Carving], W. de Worde, 1506-8, affords us an interesting insight into the table etiquette of our ancestors of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It gives us also an additional proof of the fallacy of the prevalent opinion as to the simple and patriarchal habits of our forefathers of 'the good old times.' In point of fact, society was hampered with absurd conventionalities and cumbersome ceremonials, which only ceased to be in vogue with the reigns of the latter Stuarts.

These relics of a quasi-obsolete feudalism, as regards the table arrangements, were still fully practised in the households of Elizabeth and the first James. We read that fully half an hour was occupied, after the table had been laid for the royal repast, in entries and exits of court officials, ushers, marshals, chamberlains, and married and single ladies of honour, who each made a prostration or genuflection in turn on entering or retiring, either to imaginary majesty, which was not then present, or literally to the bread or the salt, &c., as was then, it seems, their duty.

The present article treats of that portion of the *Boke of Kervynge*—a species of servant's manual of the time—which details the duties of the marshal and usher in a nobleman's house, and consequently combines the etiquette of precedence, as it then existed. It even gives us a tabular list of titles, ranks, and offices, which cannot but be found interesting.

Shenstone, a keen observer of the human mind, says, that there are no persons so punctilious as to preservation of rank, as those who have no rank at all, while the querulous assumption of the *parvenu* is proverbial; and when we recollect that nobility in Europe, as an institution, certainly dates no further back than the eleventh century, we can easily account for the tenacity with which the notables of the land at the feudal period held to their aristocratic position, and the importance they assigned to its different phases and gradations.

In our own day, the exclusive order has been well ventilated; but we rather believe that the most *incroyable* member of the 'Upper Ten Thousand' would be surprised to hear, that in the fifteenth century a duke might not 'kepe the hall, but suche estatte by thyselfe in chambere or in pavilion'—that is, that he could not eat in the public room, but only in private with his own rank.

There are a few more things fully as interesting in the following extracts:

'The marshal and ye usher must knowe al the

estattes of ye lande, and ye highe estatte of ye kinge with the ye bloude ryall, the estatte of a kinge, of a kinge's son, a pryncce, of a duke, of a marques, of an erle, of a bysshop, of a vysecounte, of a beron, of ye three chiefe judges, of a mayer of London, of a knyghte batchelour, of a knyghte, deane, of ye archdeacon, Master of ye Rolles, of ye other judges and ye Barons of Cheker, of ye mayre of Calice [query, Calais], of a doctour devine, of a doctour of bothe ye lawes, of hym that hathe bene mayer of London and sargeante of ye lawes. The estatte of a maister of the Chauncerie (and othere worshypfull prechers), and clerkes that be graduable, and al othere order of chast persons and prestes, worshypfull marchauntes and gentlemen—all these last may set at the squiers tabell.

It must have been something to have had 'esquire' tacked to one's name in those days. However, could the editor of the quaint old *Boke of Kerynges* be brought to life, and could he stop one of our modern postmen, he would be as much astounded as scandalised. But to proceed:

'Marques, erles, bysshops, and vyscountes—all these may set together at a messe.

'And beron, and mayer of London, and three chiefe judges, and ye Spekere of ye parlyment—all these may set, but onlie two or three at a messe.

'And al other estattes may set, or three or foure at a messe.

'Also, ye marshall must understand and knowe well of the bloude royall—for some lorde is of the bloude ryall, and peradventure of smal livelyhood. And some pore knyghte is forsoothe wedded unto a ladye of ryall bloude; but she shall kepe the estatte of lordes bloude, and therefore ye ryall bloude shall have ye reverence as before have I sayde.

'Also, a marshall must take grete hede of ye byrthe, and next of ye lyne of ye bloude ryall.

'Also, must he take hede of the king his officers—of the chaunceler, steuard, chamberlan, tresurere, and comptrouller.

'Also, ye marshall must take hede unto al straungers, and put them onto worshyppe and reverence, for minde; and if that they do have goode cheare, it is much to your soverayne his honour. Also ye marshall must take goode hede if that the kinge do sende your soverayne anie message; and if that he sende a knyghte, receave him lyke to a beron; and if that he do sende but a yeoman, see ye receave him lyke a squier; and if he sende but a grome, receave ye him lyke a yeoman.

'Also marke, it is no rebuke even unto a knyghte, that ye set a grome of ye kinge's at his tabell.

'Thus endeth the Boke of Service and Carvynges and Servinge, and al mannere of offyces [in his kinde] unto a pryncce, or anie otter [other] estatte, and al ye feestes in ye yeares.'

It is amusing to remark, that all throughout this rare old tract, each servant—as in this case the usher or marshal, in our day known as groom of the chambers—invariably styles his employer his 'sovereign.' The master may be a nobleman, however, as this quaint relic of the past sets forth on its title-page that its information is intended 'for the service of a pryncce or anie otter estatte.' In those days, dukes, marquises, and earls were called 'princes.' This *brevet* arrangement of titles of nobility was prevalent, indeed, for at least two centuries later; and we find that the profligate Buckingham is addressed, in one of the servile and fulsome dedications of the period, as 'The most High and Puissant Prince, the most Exalted and Noble Duke of Buckingham,' &c.

That portion of the above extracts which speaks of some 'pore knyghte' married to a lady of the 'ryall bloude,' throws us back to the stormy period when

faction, violence, or intrigue having disposed of British kings in the very summary way peculiar to our early history, set up new occupants of the throne, whose families, and even distant connections, must have been often surprised to have suddenly found themselves included in the 'ryall blond.' The marshals and ushers of those days would have found such changes particularly perplexing to them occasionally, in the exercise of their somewhat onerous and responsible vocations.

STORY OF A RURAL NATURALIST.

THE following truthful narrative exhibits, we think, a degree of devotion in the pursuit of science under difficulties which has rarely been paralleled.

There lives at present in Banff a journeyman shoemaker named Thomas Edwards. Ever since he can remember, Mr Edwards has had a strong predilection for pursuits connected with natural history; more especially, he has devoted himself to making a collection of the land-animals of the district around Banff, as well as the productions of the neighbouring sea. In making this collection, he was engaged for eleven years. During five particular summers—between 1840 and 1846—when he was from about twenty-five to thirty years of age, Edwards generally passed only part of two nights each week in his own house—namely, from a little before twelve on Saturday night till late on Sunday morning; and again on Sabbath evening till near dawn on Monday morning. But even this latter portion of the night he frequently passed dozing in a chair, or lying across his bed, having previously donned his working-clothes, so as to be prepared to start with the first peep of day. All this time Edwards was working from six in the morning till between eight and nine at night; his wages, with which he maintained a wife and a family of five daughters, being about twelve shillings a week. The other nights of the week, unless a storm prevented him, he spent out of doors in the woods with his gun, or by the sea-shore, or wherever he expected to find what he was in search of; but regularly he was at home for his work by six in the morning.

He used to sleep an hour or so during the darkest part of the night, wherever he found himself; if the rain was heavy, if possible under a tree, or such-like accommodation; if not, he did without shelter at all. By persevering thus, he made a collection numbering two thousand specimens. These, on certain fair-days, he used to arrange in the town-hall—filling three sides—and expose for a small charge. Sometimes he made a pound or two this way. Unfortunately, he was advised, some years ago, to try an exhibition in Aberdeen. He paid a pound a week as rent for a shop in Union Street, and advertised liberally. The consequences were to him ruinous. In six weeks he was hopelessly in debt. A party of equestrians arrived in the town, and, to use Edwards's own words, 'a few came to him after the performance, and said the birds were nearly as good as the horses'—not so the mass. He commenced by charging sixpence, and ended by admitting visitors for a penny; but all was in vain.

Not having the means to pay the charges he had incurred, he advertised his collection for sale, and, after considerable negotiation, got £20 for it. This sum cleared him of Aberdeen, and brought him back to Banff, a sadder, if not a wiser man. For a while he was sorely discouraged; but, by and by, his old tastes returned, and although pursued now with moderated zeal—for exposure has not strengthened his constitution—Tom has again begun to collect specimens, has been appointed keeper of the local museum, which he has aided in bringing to high order, and, with two or three able coadjutors, is

again eagerly employed in illustrating the natural history of Banff.

While still a journeyman shoemaker, he corresponds, on his favourite subject, with several magazines, as the *Naturalist* and the *Zoologist*, and his services are recognised by Mr Spence Bate and Mr C. W. Peach, well known for their zeal in natural history.

RAREY ANTICIPATED.

Dr CASANBON, in his work, entitled *Of Credulity and Incredulity in Things Natural, Civil, and Divine*, printed in the year 1668, speaks of one John Young, a 'horse-courser,' as follows:

'Whilst we were above, in the best room I had, and the servants in the kitchen by the fire; my son—the only I then had, or since have had; some twelve or thirteen years of age—comes in with his mastiff, which he was very fond of, as the mastiff was of him. John Young, to make himself and the company sport: "What will you say, sir," saith he, "if I make your dog, without touching of him, lie down, that he shall not stir?" Or to that effect. My son—for it was a mastiff of great strength and courage, which he was not a little proud of—defied him. He presently to pipe, and the mastiff, at a distance, to reel; which, when the boy saw, astonished and amazed, he began to cry out. But the man, fearing some disturbance in the house, changed his tune, or forbore further piping, I know not which, and the dog suddenly became as well and as vigorous as before. Of this I knew nothing, till the company was gone. Then a maid of the house observing that I much wondered at it, and wished I had seen it—"O master," said she, "do you wonder at it? This man doth it familiarly, and more than that, the fiercest horse or bull that is, if he speak but a word or two in their ears, they become presently tame, so that they may be led with a string; and he doth use to ride them in the sight of all people.'"

Dr Casanbon hears also, upon good authority, that 'this man was once in company, and being in the mood, or to that effect, began to brag what he could do to any dog, were he never so great or so fierce. It happened that a tanner, who had a very fierce mastiff, who all the day was kept in chains or musled, was in the company, who presently—not without an oath, perchance, it is too usual; good laws against it, and well executed, would well become a Christian commonwealth—offered to lay with him ten pounds he could not do it to the said dog—that was, without any force or use of hands to lay him flat upon the ground, take him into his arms, and to lay him upon a table. Young happened to be so well furnished at that time, that he presently pulled out of his pocket—I think I was told—ten pounds. The tanner accepts; the money on both sides laid into the hands of some one of the company, and the time set. At which time, to the no small admiration, certainly, of them that had not seen it before, but to the great astonishment, and greater indignation of him that had laid the wager, with a little piping the party did punctually perform what he had undertaken. But instead of the ten pounds he expected, being paid only with oaths and execrations, as a devil, a magician.'

Our author himself never sees any of these wonders performed, but he appears to be well convinced of them, and he is greatly impressed with Mr John Young's own manner, who, 'earnestly looking upon him, begins a discourse, how that all creatures were made by God for the use of man, and to be subject unto him; and that if men did use their power rightly, any man might do what he did.'

COLOUR OF WINE.

The colour of wine is owing to the following causes: If the skins of the grapes, or marc, are entirely excluded from the fermenting vat, a white wine is always obtained, the juice of almost all grapes, black and red, as well as green, being colourless. Champagne is made from a red grape, so deep in colour as to approach to black; and

sherry is made from a mixture of white and coloured grapes. The colour of red wine is derived from permitting the wine to ferment in contact with some of the marc, the colouring matter of the grape residing altogether in the skin, with the exception of the grape called tintilla, from which tint-wine is made, in which the juice is coloured. This colouring principle is soluble in alcohol; therefore, when the alcohol is developed by the fermentative process, the must becomes coloured in consequence of the action of the spirit upon the marc. The wine is also more deeply coloured from a higher degree of pressure given to the husks of the grapes. The colour of red wine varies from a light pink to a deep purple tint, approaching to black; the clarets hold the intermediate rank between these two extremes. Dr Henderson observes that 'on exposing red wine in bottles to the action of the sun's rays, the colouring matter is separated in large flakes without altering the flavour of the wine. The colour derived from the skins of the grapes alone is not generally very deep; the high-coloured wines of France and Portugal are often rendered so by colouring ingredients, particularly by mixture with an intensely deep red wine, called *vino tinto*, and sometimes by elderberries and colouring drugs.'—*Housewife's Reason Why*.

CUCKOO.

The moon is but a crescent white,
Toward the setting of the sun;
Through the throbbing of the night
Comes a mellow monotone:
Cuckoo!—cuckoo!

You may take a crimson cloud,
Bind it with a golden band,
All its richness were a shroud
To this o'er the meadow-land:
Cuckoo!—cuckoo!

Glory, might, and mystery,
Beauty, wonder, and unrest,
The whole soul of melody,
In a rolling note express:
Cuckoo!—cuckoo!

Gleby fields it overflows,
Like a tidal wave upbent,
Over wheat and yellow oats,
In the valley falling spent:
Cuckoo!—cuckoo!

It will touch the soul to tears,
Listening in the falling dew:
All the sadness of the years
Cometh rushing over you:
Cuckoo!—cuckoo!

Things of beauty and delight
You have dreamed of, overjoyed,
Will loom out as though you might
Reach and clasp them through the void:
Cuckoo!—cuckoo!

It will touch from summer woods
Joyous heart or wo-begone;
Melteth music for all moods
From the rapture floating on:
Cuckoo!—cuckoo!

Balmey airs of autumn nights,
Any charm or spell that is,
Windy whispers on the heights
Know no magic like to this:
Cuckoo!—cuckoo!

Sphered notes of starry belts
In its airy net are knit;
All the heart of nature melts
On the twilight out of it:
Cuckoo!—cuckoo!

T. A.

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